

A  
FRUITFUL  
**SERMON,**  
ON 1 COR. 15. 18, 19.

Written  
By WILLIAM PEMBLE  
of Magdalen Hall  
in Oxford.

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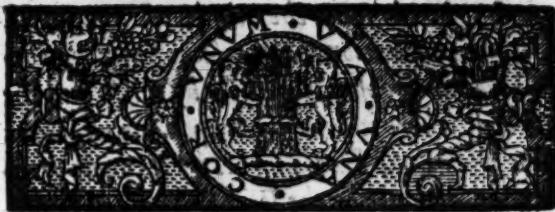
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A  
SERMON  
PREACHED AT  
ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH  
ON SUNDAY MORNING  
MAY 10. 1750.

Following  
Discourse at  
St. Martin's Church  
with great  
pleasure by  
E. P. D.

LONDON:  
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## To the Reader.

**W**EE doe finde (Christian Reader) great opposition made against our Faith, not only by our Affections, but chiefly by our Reason; for when our Faith is encountered by our Affections, wee doe gather many times some succour from our Reason; but when our Faith is layd at by our Reason, the tentation is not more strong than dangerous. For if our Reason get the better of our Faith in any particular, our Affections follow amaine: And such tentations, where they once take, doe shake and stagger the strongest Christians. Men, I know, are most an end wedded to their passions, and doe live more after their \*perturbations, than <sup>\* Arist. Eth. l. 10. c. 9.</sup> their reason: and therefore there is little good

## To the Reader.

good to bee done on the minde of a man till  
 his <sup>a</sup> perturbations bee at some quiet. Now  
 where our Reason is guided by Faith and the  
 Word, there it doth good vpon our passions:  
 but where our Reason goes by its owne prin-  
 ciples, and not by the Word, there our affe-  
 ctions are the worser for our Reason; and a  
 man shall neuer come to deny all his Affe-  
 ctions, till he haue first denied his Reason. But  
 blessed be God, Faith is our <sup>b</sup> victory, and it  
 doth not only quiet the Affections, but at last  
 it doth so triumph ouer Reason it selfe, that  
 men are willing to become <sup>c</sup> fooles that they  
 may be wise. The <sup>d</sup> vnderstanding of a man  
 rests not till it bee satisfied; and nothing  
 can giue full and vltimate satisfaction to the  
 intellect and mind of a man; till by Faith it  
 be captiuated to the obedience of <sup>e</sup> God, and  
<sup>f</sup> Christ: and when that is once done, then  
 Reason followes the light of the Word, and  
 the Affections follow the light of Reason.  
 And hence it is, that our Faith doth adhere  
 with most firmnesse to those Principles and  
 Articles of our Creed, wherein Reason is  
 quite at a stand. I will make my instance in  
 the Article of our Resurrection; a Point, by  
 the consent of all I know (but <sup>g</sup> one) vnto  
 above

<sup>a</sup> Arist. Phys. 7.  
 c. 13. & Eth.  
 l. 10. c. 9.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Iohn 5. 4.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. 3. 18.

<sup>d</sup> Arist de in-  
 terp. 2. 3. part. 6.

<sup>e</sup> Vid. Aquin.  
 1. 2. q. 109. d. 1.  
 ad 1. Arist. ad  
 Eudemum. l. 7.  
 c. 14. text. 2. 16.

<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. 10. 5.

<sup>g</sup> Pac. cōment.  
 in Arist. de ani-  
 ma, cap. 5. sect. 7.



# To the Reader.

about the whole element of nature, reason in  
it selfe doth not onely deny it, but deride it,  
<sup>a</sup> Philosophers hisse at it. <sup>b</sup> The Apostles  
themselves in that their greatest tentation  
did for a time look somewhat strange vpon it.  
But yet we see when their Reason was deni-  
ed, and their Faith tooke place, <sup>c</sup> they were  
not more willing to liue and dye vpon any Do-  
ctrine of Saluation, than vpon this of the Re-  
surrection, and to beleue this, is a meer Act of  
Faith alone. <sup>d</sup> One, perhaps two of the A-  
postles, saw his death, none his Resurrection:  
And tis obserued, that it was so ordered by the  
Providence of God, that this maine Point of  
Diuinity might bee beleued by the Apostles,  
and deliuered ouer by them to the Church of  
the Gentiles, as a meer act of faith, and not of  
sight: Faith being the euidence of things not  
seene, and the iust living by faith, and not by  
sight. Faith then doth most in those Points of  
Diuinitie, wherein reason is most opposite.  
Aproofe wherof the Lord gaue in the Author  
of this Sermon, who a few daies before his last  
sicknes, preached this Sermon as touching the  
Resurrection, by a sweet & secret providence  
of God, the better to fit himselfe for his last  
Enemy. He was a man full of wit, learning,  
and

<sup>a</sup> Art. 17. 32.  
<sup>b</sup> Plin. l. 7. c. 55.  
<sup>c</sup> Luke 24.

<sup>c</sup> Art. 1. & pas-  
sim.

<sup>d</sup> Chrys. Quod  
Christus sit  
Deus. Aug. ep.  
112. c. 3. Scot. in  
l. 3. Sent. d. 24.  
q. vnica sect.  
ad primum  
principium.

To the Reader.

& strength of reason; & yet against the worst  
 that Satan could do, reason yeilded, his Faith  
 wrought out all disputes, and he was so firme  
 in this Point, that hee reioyced that his body  
 should not wait so long for the Resurrection  
 as do the bodies of the Patriarks. Reason said  
 nothing, faith did all, and set him in that  
 height & strength of beliefe, that he beleueed  
 here without doubting: Albeit whilst wee line  
 here we do\* know but in part, yet an imperfect  
 faith may, and doth bring forth a full assu-  
 rance, sith faith is a grace giuen, because &  
 only whilst wee are imperfect, and when once  
 we are made compleate, then our faith b doth  
 cease. The c Orator blamed himselfe, for that  
 when he was in trouble he did not walk by his  
 own Principles: But this our Diuine, what  
 he deliuered in this his last farewell, he fully  
 beleueed in his sicknesse. Let vs pray, that as  
 he, so we may line by faith, & not by reason,  
 both whilst we line, & when we dye: & then  
 we shall finde the truth and comfort of this,  
 That faith, when its once made strong, doub-  
 teth least of those things, against which our  
 reason disputeth most. Blessed is hee that be-  
 leeueth, and sees not.

\* 1 Cor. 13. 9.

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 4. 21.  
Col. 2. 2.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 13. vlt.

<sup>c</sup> Lib. 9. epist.  
fam. ep. 1.

Thine in Christ Iesus

RICH. CAPEL



1 COR. 15. 19. 20.

If in this life only we haue hope in Christ, we  
are of all men the most miserable.  
But now is Christ risen from the dead, and  
become the first fruits of them that slepe.

**H**e Disputes of the blessed  
Apostle in this whole Chap-  
ter, is to proue a Resurrection  
of the dead, against the error  
of the Epicures and Sadduces.  
The maine Argument where-  
by hee proues it, is this, If  
Christ bee risen, then the dead shall rise. But  
Christ is risen: Therefore the dead shall arise  
also. The *minor*, that Christ is risen, the Apo-  
stle proues from the third Verse vnto the  
twelfth, by the Scriptures, by the witness of  
the Twelue Apostles, and more than hie hun-  
dred Brethren, to whom hee appeared after his

B

Refur-

2 *A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.*

Resurrection, and lastly by his own Testimony, vpon whom Christ shewed himselfe after his ascension into heauen. The *maine*, That if Christ be risen, the dead must rise too, the Apostle be-gianes to proue at the twelfth Verse. [Now if it be preached that Christ is risen from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no Resurrection of the dead?] This soule ineonsequence the Apostle confutes in the next Verse, by the absurditie that would follow thereupon; That if there be no Resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen. Vpon which absurditie, other absurdities would also follow, That if Christ bee not risen, then the Apostles preaching, and testimony touching Christs Resurrection, were false, and that the Corinthians faith in Christ is vaine. If Christ bee yet in his graue, they and all that belecue in Christ, bee yet in their sinnes, they that are dead in the Faith of Christ are perished, and gone to hell in their sinnes, they that liue in the faith of Christ are of all men most vnhappy, without reward here, and sure of punishment hereafter. But Christ being raised from the dead, these absurdities are taken away, the Apostles are true in their preaching, and all men are happy in beleeuing in Christ put to death for sinne, and raised from death for our iustification. (*If in this life only we haue hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ is risen &c.*) This is in brieft the dependance of the words.

The

A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20. 3

The parts are, as the Verses, two.

1. An absurditie vpon the deniall of a truth. That Christians are of all men in worst condition, is an absurd assertion. But yet twere true, if after this life they had no hope of Happinesse. And hopelesse they must needs bee, if Christ be not risen, and themselves shall not rise. [*If in this life only &c.*]

2. A remouall of this absurditie, by an affirmation of the Truth; Christians are not vnhappy men, for why [*Christ is risen*] hauing overcome sinne and death: And this is not for himselfe, but for their sakes: He [*is become the first fruits of them that slept*] that as himselfe by his owne, so they by his power, shall certainly arise vnto immortall life and glory. Of these things in order very plainely. The first Instruction I desire you to obserue, is this, that

*True Christians are more unhappy than any other men, if their happinesse bee confined to this life only.*

If death bring to an end their liues and their hopes both at once, they that beleue in Christ are in a worse estate, than Epicures, Atheists, and other vagodly persons, who while they liue with their fill of pleasures, Christians inherit sorrowes and troubles. No Profession in the world so discomfortable, as that of true Religion, take once away from the godly man the hope of Heauen. If Christ bee beneficiall

4 A Sermon on COOR. 15. 19, 20.

vnto him but only till he dye, as good is to bee any thing, as a Christian; You may soone see it to bee true, if you cast your eyes vpon the state of true Christians in this life.

Wee are of all men most miserable, saith the Apostle. Whom hee means. Wee Apostles and Ministers of the Gospell; Or, all we Christians that beleue in Christ. He means both sorts, Ministers and People.

1. For Ministers: They are more miserable than any other Christians; of all others they are most exposed vnto troubles, and that in regard of the nature of their Office. They by their preaching and Ministry doe bid defiance to the powers of darkenesse, they proclaime themselves open Enemies to Sathan and his Kingdome. If others be Souldiers, they be the Captains, and stand for most in the face of the Enemies, and neere of all to danger. Whence it followes, That what euer mischief the Prince of the darkenesse of this World, or his seruants, the children of disobedience, can inuent against them, they shall bee sure to feele it, if force or craft can lay it on them. Satan euer aymes at the fairest: Smite the Shepheard, and it will be easie to scatter the Sheepe: Slay a King of Israel, and the rest of the Army will soone rout. [*The world hateth mee (saith Christ) because I resist of it; that the workes thereof are euill*] Iohn 7. 7. As he hated and persecuted him, so it will euer doe to his Ministers and Ambassadors. So long as there



there is in the World a faithfull Minister to re-  
proue sinne, and wicked persons that loue to  
commit sinne, there will euer bee malice and  
despite vsed against them. Whence at all times  
so many discontentments haue bin bred against  
godly Ministers, by froward and disobedient  
People, who, louing to doe euill, and haring to  
be reprov'd, haue not spared, to the vtmost of  
their malicious might, to heape vexations and  
sorrows vpon them, by whose Ministry the  
glad tidings of peace and good things haue bin  
brought vnto them. When Ministers weepe in  
secret for the sinnes of their People, when they  
poure out prayers and teares for their saluation,  
when they behold their stubbornesse and diso-  
bedience against the Word with sad and heauie  
hearts, when they haue spent their strength and  
life amongst them, wasting themselves in la-  
bour to doe them good; and after in grieffe to  
see so little good done on them, whats their re-  
compence for all their good will, but hatred,  
derision, a mocke and scoffe; some iniurie, vniust  
vexation, some malicious accusation or other?  
Woe is mee (saith Ieremie in a passion, seeing  
how miserably hee was vsed by his Country-  
men) [*Woe is mee, my mother, that thou hast borne  
me a contentious man, and a man that stryeth with  
the whole Earth*] Ier. 15. 10. Poore Prophet,  
what harme had he done them? [*I haue neither  
lent on vsury, nor men haue lent to me on vsury, yet  
every one doth curse me*] Wrong'd them hee had

6 *A Sermon vnto COR. 15. 19, 20.*

not in ciuill dealings ; in his Ministry hee had faithfully declared vnto them the will of God, reprocured them of their sinnefull abominations, foretold them of Gods heauie wrath ready to fall vpon the whole state : was this that for which they curse him, rayle at him, persecute him, count him an enemy to the State, and not worthy to liue ? Yea this was cause enough. Doth he fore-tell the destruction of Ierusalem? nay then he is a traitor presently, hee weakens the hands of the men of Warre, hee seekes not the good, but the hurt of the People, *Ier. 38. 4.* Mad men that will bee valiant and victorious in spite of God : and therefore are ready to slay his Prophet for telling them the truth, that God will not helpe them. Doth he sharply and boldly reprove the sinnes of the People ? why thats not to bee endured. Come, say the People, *Ier. 18. 18.* [*Come let vs imagine some devise against Ieremiah*] let vs picke a hole in his coate, let vs lay a plot to bring him in trouble. Is he so free of his tongue ? nay then [*Let vs smite him with the tongue*] reuile him, raise some slander vpon him, forge some accusation to bring him in question : and as for his talke, [*Let vs not giue heede to any of his words*] What rage and tumult is there if Christ once be preached among the Gentiles ? what blustering and adoe if a Paul come once amongst beastly Ephesians, and learned but idolatrous Athenians ? Wilt nor Vice may not endure his presence. Let a Minister that

that is faithfull to God, and true to mens soules, plainly, yet meekely, reprove men for their ignorance, pride, covetousnesse, vsury, false dealing, adultery, swearing, &c. if they can, they will euen make him weary of his life: what euer may bee done by bitter speeches, vni- kinde and iniurious dealing, he may bee sure to looke for it. Well may St. Paul say, Wee are of all men most miserable: We Apostles, and Mi- nisters of the Gospell, are in far the worst case of all men, who, like Beacons vpon Mountaines tops, stand open continually to all tempests raised against vs by wicked men and spirits. In all this vexation lighting vpon the faithfull Mi- nisters of Christ Iesus, what other comfort in this life haue they but this, that what euer ill successe there be in their Ministry, whatsoeuer miserlesye vpon their persons, yet their Work is with the Lord, and their Reward is with their God: Take away this hope in Christ for the life to come, and yee leaue them the most for- lorne men in the world.

2 For true Christians, they are more misera- ble than all other men: and that in regard of the Nature of true Religion which they professe, which agrees not with the good liking of the world, and therefore it cannot agree with that, nor them that sincerely professe it. *[If yee were of the world, the world would loue his own: but because yee are not of the world, but I haue chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you]*

3 *A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.*

700] saith Christ of all the Elect, *John 15. 19.* They are men of another generation, their liues are not like other mens : and therefore the world wonders at them as at some strange Bird or Beast. Their courses runne byas from other mens, and stand opposite to their vngodly practices : So that when they looke vpon them, to their great displeasure, they alwayes see in their well doing, a reall reproofe of their owne euill doing. But if at any time they be so venturous as in words also to reprove them, then there is no patience to bee had. If Let but once say, [*Brethren, I pray you, doe not so wickedly*] the Citizens of Sodome grow cholerike straight way: This fellow will bee a iudge and ruler, hee must carpe and finde fault; [*Nay wee will deale worse with thee, than with them*] say those Beasts in the shape of men, *Gen. 19. 9.* So now, these precise men marre all : a man cannot sweate, or drinke drunke, or talke filthily, or in any thing doe otherwise than he should doe; but straight way they are reproving, admonishing, exhorting : so that a man cannot liue quietly by them, nor displease God, but they le take offence at it. Hence are all malicious deuises and practices against the godly : they bee the men whom the world hath accused as the worst of malifactors, disgraced as persons most contemptible, persecuted as worthy to bee driven from the societie of men.

In the times of the Primitiue Church, if any thing

thing were amisse in the Romane State, the Christians presently are cryed out vpon, they must smart as the cause of it; If it raine not at all, or too much, if lightning and thunder doe any harme, if the Legions mis-carry, then away with the Christians, to the racke, the fire, the sword, the Lions, &c. So now in the Christian world, all the blame of the trouble must lye on the reformed Churches; albeit what is their fault? except it bee that they are innocent. But were the Churches of God rooted vp out of the world, and all the Synagogues of God destroyed in the Land, why then twere well, the world would bee at peace and vnity: although the world stand but for the Churches sake. In short [*Every one that will liue godly must suffer persecution*] 2 Tim. 3. 12. What, must? Yea: and that in a peaceable Church as well as a troubled. Hee must suffer persecution of the heart, of the tongue, or of the hand. Hee shall bee hated if not reuiled, reuiled if not smitten, smitten if not slaine.

Besides all which molestations from the world, infinite are those troubles wherewith euery godly soule is assaulted by Sathan, and its owne corruption: a hard and continuall taske it hath in fighting against the spirituall wickednesses in high places, in striving against so many lusts, and disordered affections that cannot bee easily gouerned. Many bitter stormes it feelles of temptations, sorrowes, and feares, which  
C makes

makes them oft cry out for grieſe of heart, and cauſeth their bones to waxe dry, and the powers of their body to faile.

This now is the [*Generation of Gods children*] as Dauid ſpeakes, *Pſal. 73. 15.* this their lot to be daily puniſhed, and chaſtened euery morning, when others liue at eaſe and proſperitie. So that if yee take from theſe the hope of future bleſſedneſſe by Chriſt, the heart will ſoone breake, when there is left them nothing but miſery. Alas, what is the temporall reward of Pietie, if after death a man muſt ſuffer eternall miſery? Poore is the contentment that can bee found in Vertue and Religion, if it ſtretch no further than to the end of this life; if after death there bee nothing, or nothing but miſery. Cut from a man his hope in Chriſt for hereafter, and then the Epicures counſell will ſeeme good, [*Let vs eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dye.*] Let vs take our pleaſure while wee may. If wee dye as Beaſts, and come to nothing, then lets liue as Beaſts too: Or if wee muſt dye worſe than Beaſts, and our ſoules goe into miſery, as we muſt, if Chriſt doe vs good no longer than we liue; why then what auailes it to ioy in Vertue and Religion, to follow an empty name of goodneſſe, when nothing is got by it after death, and for the preſent nothing worth the deſiring? Lets reſtraine our eyes and our hearts from no pleaſures that may bee procured. Let Vertue bee onely our ſtals to winne  
honour,



honour, where men out of error esteeme highly of it : among others, loue wee Vice where vertue is banished. All comes to one then, bee vicious, and be but miserable hereafter; bee vertuous, and bee no lesse. Such wilde and desperate resolutions, that notwithstanding our Christian Faith, doe yet take place in too many mens hearts, might then be reckoned of all to bee good wholsome counsell, if the day of our death were the utmost period of time, beyond which no happinesse were to be enioyed. Wee see then the Point to bee plaine enough, That true Christians, barrd of their hope in Christ for the life to come, are more miserable than other men : because all are alike hereafter, and for this life the godly misse of those contentments which the wicked enioy. Nay more miserable, not onely than men, but than Beasts also : seeing Beasts dye, but are not iudged after death; they come to nothing, but not to misery, as men out of Christ doe.

The Vses of this Instruction shall be two :

*Vse 1.* To lesson vs how to iudge of the State of the Church, and also of priuate Christians : namely, That we iudge not of them according to outward appearance, but that wee iudge righteous iudgement. Hee that lookes on them with a carnall eye, considering them in their present condition, without relation to Christ, and their future happinesse by him, shall see no great matter to winne his desire toward them.

12 *A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.*

For the Church her glory is not of this World. She is comely, but sunne-burnt with afflictions and persecutions, shee lyes among the pots in poore and despicable estate, when the Synagogue of Sathan ruffles in all pride and pleasure. The whore of Rome is clothed with scarlet and all gallantry, *Re. 17. 4.* She liues in abundance of pleasures, *Rom. 18. 3.* She dares say, I sit as Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no mourning. Shee laughes; when other Churches weepe in teares of blood. Therefore doe many iudge her blessed, and these miserable: and many turne in thither. Indeed were her hope only in this life, their choyce were good: miserable were shee if alwaies Militant and neuer Triumphant. But wee haue learned of our Apostle, not to iudge of the Church of God by her miserable outside that appeares to vs in this life. Let her bee poore and persecuted, driuen into wildernesses, and caues of the earth, twas so of old, when Idolatrous Gentilisme swagered it in glorious Temples by Law and force of sword: Be she a few to many, meane to mighty, twas so euer. What if she seeme to bee now driuen into a corner of this westerne World, so that the Aduersarie may conceiue hope, that now there needes but one push more to thrust her into another Coast, or to sinke her in the Sea? let vs not for all that iudge the worse of her, nor leaue the Temple of God, to run ouer to the Temples of Idols and Molaters.

For

*A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20. 13*

For priuate Christians, the same Rule must be followed, for them also not to iudge them by their state in this life. Indeed if we looke vpon them while they are here disgraced as the off-scouring of the world, scorned by great men, iniurd by all men, driuen into obscurity, and trodden vnder foote from rising vp in the world; if we see Daniel lodgd among Lions, Paul and Silas in the Stockes, and at the whipping Post, the Martyrs bodies melting in the flames, if we behold them tryed by mockings and scourgings, by bonds and imprisonment; when wee see them stoned, hewen asunder, tempted, slaine with the sword, wandring vp and downe in sheepe-skinnes, and in goates-skins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented, wandring in Wildernesses, and Mountaines, and Dennes, and Caues of the Earth, as in *1 Pet. 1. 136, 37, 38*. in this case, who but would iudge them to bee miserable men? Againe, when wee see a poore Christian frequent in prayer and hearing, strict in his life, fearefull to take liberty, where others sinne with boldnesse, often in fasting to humble his soule, and beate downe his body, see his heart full of griefe, his eyes runne downe with teares for his owne finnes, and for the sins of the Land wherein he liues, behold him toyling vnder the burden of sin, wearied out with spirituall conflicts in his encounters with Sathan, and that sin that still dwels in him: And now, seems not such a one in thy eyes to bee a contemptible

14 *A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.*

and miserable wretch: Well, iudge not by the sight of thine eies, be not thou a foole to esteeme such a one mad: though for the present it appeare not what such a one shall bee, yet know, that when Christ shall appeare, he shall appeare with him in glory; and therefore whatever his estate in this life bee, yet his end shall bee with honour.

*Vse 2.* This teacheth vs in generall, that no man is a happy man, who lookes for no other happinesse but in this life. If in this life onely there be hope, Christians be of all most miserable; but yet all others also bee miserable too. For why? their happinesse which here they haue, is but for a few yeares, and after that comes death, then iudgement, and euermore miserable. Ah my Brethren! *in a wofulle state for one to be [A man of this world, whose portion is in this life]* as it is *Psal. 17. 14.* When all the happinesse a man cares for or lookes after, is this, that he hath money enough, friends enow, store of lands and liuings, great honours, much ease, varietie of pleasures, with such other things as serue only to the filling of our bellies, and satisfiying of a few base and earthly affections: Yet this is all which most men desire, and whereafter their hearts doe runne all dayes of their liues; they neuer looke higher than these lower parts of the world. What pitie is it to see a man, so noble a Creature, borne vnto immortalitie, and an euermore being, yet to spend a fiftie or sixty  
years

*A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20. 15*

yeares in this life, and yet scarce euer thinke seriously of another world, till there be no remedy, but that he must goe out of this? Brethren, take we notice of this fault, and know wee that this world is not our resting place: let vs now forsake it in our affections, and let our liues testifie, that we be such as seeke after a Country, not earthly, but heavenly, where wee shall haue a more enduring substance than all the treasures of this world. Thus much of the first point, from the 19. Verse.

I come vnto the next words, wherein the Apostle confutes the former absurditie, shewing that godly Christians are not to bee accounted more miserable than all others, forasmuch as their hope in Christ is for the life to come, as well as this life. But now, saith hee, Christ is risen. Yea, might they say, but what is that to vs? Very much; for he rose that we might rise, [*He is become the first fruits of them that sleepe*] He is the first that rose from the dead, and is the cause to raise all others vp.

The Instruction that briefly wee learne from hence, is this, that

*The Resurrection of Christ is the cause of our Resurrection to life and glory.*

This the Apostle intends, when he saith jointly together, Christ is risen and become the first fruits of such as sleepe, i. e. are dead. Christ may bee called the first fruits of them that rise from death, in a double respect:

1. Because.

16 *A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.*

1. Because Christ was the first that rose from death. which we must vnderstand with some limitation: for it is certain, that others were raised from the dead before Christs Resurrection, as we reade of diuers in the Old and New Testament: but here is the difference between them and Christ;

1. They rose by the power of Christ, Christ by his owne power. Hee had power, as to lay downe, so to take it to himselfe againe. Beeing God as well as man, of himselfe he was able to quicken his own body. So could nor they.

2. Christ rose, but dyed no more: the others rose vnto life, but dyed againe; as Lazarus, &c. who tasted twice of temporall death. So then Christ was the first of all the dead, that raised himselfe vnto an euerlasting life.

2. Because Christ is the cause why all men else rise from the dead. This is chiefly intended by the Apostle, when he saith, Christ is the first fruits of them that sleepe. The first fruits were by the Law, *Deut. 26. 1. & seq.* to be offered vnto the Lord, before such time as the Iewes might eate of the rest of their haruest. By that oblation the whole haruest was sanctified vnto their lawfull vse; as it is *Leuit. 23. 14.* And therefore the Apostle saith, *Rom. 11. 16.* [*If the first fruits be holy, soill the whole lampe*] namely, after the consecrating of the first fruits all the remainder might lawfully bee vsed in a good and holy manner. From this custome the Apostle  
drawes



drawes the Metaphor, calling Christ the first fruits of the dead. Namely, that as by them all the rest of the store was consecrated; so in and by the body of Christ rising out of his graue, the bodies of all the Elect shall receiue this power and priuiledge, to breake asunder the bands of death, and returne to life and blessed immortalitie. Which comes to passe in a two-fold regard:

1. Because of the inseparable Vnion which is between Christ and the Church. The first fruits are a part of the whole lump, and of the same nature with the whole: So is Christ and the Church; he is the head, they are the members of the same body; he is the stocke and roote, they the branches of the same Vine. And therefore the Life, which is in Christ the Head, is diffused into the Members; the iuice which is in the roote, flowes forth into the branches. A liuing head will not bee coupled with a dead body, nor will that true Vine beare any withered branches. Whence in verse 45. of this 15. chapter, Christ the second Adam is called [*A quickning spirit*] because of that diuine power which is in him, to make aliuie both soules dead in sinne, and bodies rotten in their graues.

2. Because Christs Resurrection hath taken away all impediments of our glorious Resurrection. If Christ had bin held in the graue, the reason had beene because hee could not ouercome death, and make full payment of the price of our

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Redemption.

18 *A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.*

Redemption. But now Christ, hauing broken in  
sunder the barres of the graue by his Resurrec-  
tion, he hath manifestly declared, that our Ran-  
some is fully made, Hell & Death & the Graue  
ouercome, Gods Wrath appeased: and therfore  
that now there is nothing that should hinder our  
Resurrection to life and glory. Even as after the  
consecration of the first fruits, the Iewes might  
lawfully vse their other store without impedi-  
ment: So Christ hauing dyed, and rose againe  
for this very end, to take out of the way what-  
soeuer thing might hold vs in death and destru-  
ction, there is now nothing can haue dominion  
ouer vs to throw our soules to hell, or detaine  
our bodies in the graue.

But here a Question arises, touching the Re-  
surrection of the wicked at the last day: Shall  
not they arise also, and that by the power of  
Christ: I answer, They shall arise by the power  
of Christ. But here we must obserue, that Christ  
is to be considered in a double respect: 1. As he  
is head of the Church; 2. As he is iudge of the  
whole world. The godly are raysed by the  
power of Christ as Head of the Church, from  
whom descends into his members that quicke-  
ning power, which giues life vnto the bodies of  
the Saints, ioyning righteous soules vnto glori-  
ous bodies, in a blissefull Vnion for ever. The  
wicked arise by the power of Christ, as hee is  
Iudge of the world, who hauing all power and  
iudgement committed to him, by his soueraigne

\* Col. 1. 18.  
He is the head  
of the body,  
the Church,  
who is the be-  
ginning and  
first borne &c.

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*A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20, 21*

command brings together those damned soules vnto their miserable bodies, that so he may execute vpon both to the full, the iudgement of eternall vengeance. Now euen in respect of these, Christ may be said to be the first fruits of the dead; namely thus, That if the Iudge bee risen, they must also bee made to rise that are to be iudged. This is, most excellently expressed by Christ himselfe, *Iohn 5. 26, 27. [As the father hath life in himselfe, so likewise hath hee given to the son to haue life in himselfe]* namely, to quicken by vertue thereof the soules of his Elect in Regeneration, and the bodies of his Elect in the Resurrection. It followes, *[And hee hath given him power also to execute iudgement, in that he is the sonne of man]* Thus he hath also to doe with the reprobate and wicked, by his power to pull them out of their graves, like toads out of their holes, and after to throw their bodies with their soules into the pit of perdition. For then it followes, Verse, 28, 29. *[Maruell not at this, for the houres shall come, in which all that are in the graues shall heare his voyce. And they shall come forth that haue done good vnto the Resurrection of life, and they that haue done euill vnto the Resurrection of condemnation.]* Let thus much suffice for opening of this Point. I come to some Application.

*Vse 1.* To strengthen our Faith in the Article of the Resurrection from the dead. This is a point which is hardly beleueed, and to naturall Reason it seemes incredible. But let vs not di-

spite, where God plainly affirms the matter: rest we our selues vpon his power and promise, neuer doubting, but what hath bin done in the first fruits, shall bee done to the whole lump. The grave hath lost her Victorie over the bodie of Christ; and shee shall not recouer it against our bodies.

*Vse 2.* To teach vs whence to fetch true Consolation vnto our hearts, in regard of the hard estate wee are to endure in this present world. Christ is risen, and we by him shall rise to glory; and therefore be our condition neuer so miserable in this life, yet happy men we are, that are heires to so much blessednesse hereafter. Vpon this nayle hangs all comfort; and, Brethren, know that it is fastened in a sure place, and will not deceiue vs in time of neede. Are we Ministers? why let vs (as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. 6. 4.) approue our selues as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses; in stripes, in prisons, in tumults, in labours; by watchings, by fastings, by purity, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindnesse, by the holy Ghost, by loue vnfeined; by the Word of Truth, by the power of God, by the armour of Righteousnesse on the right hand and on the left; by honour and dishonour, by euill report and good report, &c. as the Apostle there goes on. In all this trauell and painefulnesse, let this reioyce our soules. Wee serue a Master will see vs well rewarded. Christ in whom our hope

*A Sermon on 1. COR. 15. 19, 20. 21*

hope is, he is risen : and with him shall we arise also, who in that day shall giue vnto vs the crowne of Righteousnesse, which is layd vp for vs : as the Apostle comforts himselfe, *2 Tim.* 4. 8. Art thou a private Christian, walking in thine integritie, and faithfully endeauouring to feare God and keep his commandments ? and doest thou for this suffer contempt ? is thy soule filled full with the mocking of the wealthy, and despitefulnesse of the proud ? is thy name put out as an euill doer ? art thou at all hands disquieted by vniust vexations ? Faint not, forsake not thy profession for this, but rather glorifie God in this behalfe. Looke vnto the recompence of reward, and hold fast the hope of eternall life in Christ Iesus. Art thou trauayled vnder the burden of sins and afflictions, assaulted with continuall temptations and feares ? yet lift vp thy heart, and wait, there is a day of refreshing that comes shortly from the presence of God. Grieue not to see thy selfe in paine, when others wallow in pleasures; choose rather to reioyce in that sorrow which will end in ioy, than to desire those pleasures whose issue is destruction. Thinke it not much to part with thy countrey, thy children, thy possessions, thy life, if the world will take them from thee for Christ and his Gospel sake : all these and much better than these shall be restored to thee in the resurrection of the iust. When Christ requires it, spare not to giue that body of thine to the fire,

which in a short time by sicknesse will fall to the ground : know, tis as easie for Christ to giue it thee backe againe out of the flames, as out of the dust. In banishment, in prison, in pouerty, in temptation, in death, comfort thy heart with the meditation of Iesus Christ risen from the dead, and of thy Resurrection by him. Say with thy selfe, Yet I am not miserable, so long as my Redeemer is happy ; he liues, and I shall liue with him ; these teares will one day bee wiped away : though all faile, yet Christ will not faile me ; my hope in him shall neuer bee cut off, no not in death. Men may take from mee my goods, they cannot rob mee of my grace ; banish mee from my countrey, but not from heauen ; take from mee my life, but not my happinesse. No, my faith, my heauen, my happinesse, all is in his keeping that will safely preserue them for me, and me to them.

My beloued Brethren, I beseech you let our hearts bee employed in these thoughts, and make we this vse of the present Solemnity. Such Meditations fit this day, this season, all seasons. To end, grow hence into a firme Resolution to bee faithfull in doing Gods will, there is a certaine reward for this : to bee patient in suffering aduersity, there is a sure remedy and ease for it. No euill shall hurt thee, now death, and the graue, and sinne, are vanquished for thee : no good thing shall bee want-



*A Sermon on 1 COR. 15. 19, 20.* 23

wanting vnto thee, now that Christ by rising  
from the dead hath brought life & immortalitie  
vnto thee. Wherefore in nothing be dismay-  
ed, but bee stedfast, vnmoueable, alwayes  
abounding in the worke of the Lord,  
for as much as you know, that  
your labour is not in vaine  
in the LORD.

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*FINIS.*

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